

GRAPHIC STORY OF VERA CRUZ

Capture of Mexican City After
Two Days' Fight Presents
Vivid Picture.

VALOR OF OUR BLUEJACKETS

Warships Shelled Buildings in Which
Mexican "Snipers" Had Taken Ref-
uge—Natives Surprised at Cour-
tesy of American Troops.

Vera Cruz, Mexico, April 24.—Twelve Americans were killed and thirty wounded before the city of Vera Cruz came into the undisputed possession of the American invading forces after a two-day fight. Although the Mexicans suffered more severely, the number of their casualties has not been ascertained. The best estimates obtained by Capt. William R. Rush of the battleship Florida indicated that in the engagements of Tuesday and Wednesday their dead numbered about one hundred and fifty. No person knows how many Mexicans fell wounded, as many of them were taken away and hidden by friends.

In the streets about the plaza Wednesday afternoon lay fifteen or twenty bodies, a majority of them attired in citizen's clothing. Some of the men evidently had been dead since the engagement Tuesday and the tropical heat made their immediate disposal imperative. One of the first orders given after the town had been captured was to bury the Mexican dead in a trench at the sea end of one of the streets leading from the plaza.

Scores Are Taken Prisoners.
When the city was taken the order was given to advance carefully and search every building for men bearing arms. Scores of prisoners were taken, the majority of them protesting volubly—many hysterically—that they were not guilty of any unfriendliness toward the Americans. Accustomed as the Mexicans are to seeing their own contending forces shoot immediately all prisoners taken, the captured men could not but believe that they would receive no less drastic treatment at the hands of the Americans. The guns found in houses were thrown by the marines and blue-jackets from the upper balconies to the pavement below.

The most spirited action was the taking of the naval academy. Aside from that fight, no definite, organized opposition was encountered by the Americans. A hot fire was poured from the naval college, but a few well directed shots from the cruisers Chester, San Francisco and Prairie tore gaping holes in the stone walls and silenced the rifle fire of the Mexicans inside. The blue-jackets then were enabled to proceed with the task they had in hand.

Escape From Fight Cut Off.
Despite the shelling it had received Tuesday, a squad of soldiers continued to give considerable trouble to the Americans from the battered Benito Juarez tower. After they had been silenced and removed from the tower it was discovered that the soldiers had continued fighting for lack of ability to do anything else. The shells from the warships Tuesday had torn away the stairway in the tower and the men had been compelled to remain in it.

Appeal From Aged Mexican.

Coincident with the orders for the general advance of the Americans an aged, white-haired Mexican, carrying the white flag of truce, came down a street from the center of the city. He carried a letter to the chief of police, the only authority he hoped to reach, and desired Consul Granada to read it. It was an urgent appeal to the chief of police to call off the snipers and prevent the bombardment he believed would follow if they continued their execution.

Even before the messenger had climbed the stairs into the consul's office Capt. Rush was informed of the contents of the note he bore and immediately sounded "cease firing" and "halt." But it was too late. The action had been begun all along the line and it was not considered wise to attempt further measures to stop it. The commanders ordered their men forward at double quick, which they carried out with a vigor that afterward gave them the city.

Evidences of War.

Hood-battered sidewalks, broken windows and bullet-scarred walls gave the plaza a gruesome aspect. Within the Diligencia hotel there were forty Americans, most of them women, who had been there since the commencement of hostilities. When the square was taken they were immediately notified that they might go on the Spanish cruiser Carlos V. outside the breakwater in order to give the Prairie room to fire her guns. The Spanish commander refused, saying that he feared not maneuver his boat in so small a space at night. He also declared that he needed to take on a supply of fresh water. Admiral Fletcher insisted yesterday that his order be carried out, and the Carlos V. moved outside just before the attack on the center of the city began.

At 10:05 Wednesday morning the Americans were in undisputed possession of all the city except the southwest quarter, in which the barracks are situated, and a few outlying districts. At noon they had taken

the barracks. When the city prison, which faces the main plaza, was captured, Lieutenant-Commander Buchanan of the Florida made an inspection tour through it. There was great surprise among the Mexicans who had gathered there that the prisoners were not released. They had been accustomed to seeing the victor always release prisoners and then impress them all into his army.

Chief of Police Captured.
Chief of Police Antonio Villa Vincencio was taken prisoner by the Americans shortly after they had occupied the main plaza of the city. It was suggested to him that he continue in his official capacity to direct the city's protective system. He took the question under advisement. Had the frightened mayor made up his mind to accede to Admiral Fletcher's suggestion, which was made through Consul Canada, the Mexicans might have been spared the humiliation of being forced from their positions and undoubtedly a number of lives would not have been sacrificed.

When Admiral Fletcher directed that battalions of bluejackets and marines be landed from Rear Admiral Badger's ships before dawn and be drawn up in the plaza before the railroad station, thence to proceed to take the entire town, he acted only after warning and after 15 shells from the Prairie's three-inch guns had been thrown into the steel framework of the new market, which faces Market place. A persistent but scattered fire came from rifles in the market during all the early hours of the morning, and Admiral Badger's men landed to the accompaniment of rifle bullets over their heads.

Uniforms Dyed With Rust.

When the rush started Admiral Badger's bluejackets, clad in orange-colored clothing, made for them on the trip down by dyeing white uniforms with iron rust, moved in close column formation up the water front, past the market and across the front of the naval college, a long, three-story structure built of adobe and having a tile roof. The column moved steadily forward until the first company had passed beyond the college and the remainder were covering the whole front close against the wall.

Suddenly a spatter of rifle firing broke out. Flashes from the rifles were plainly visible in the upper window of the college and along the roofs. The jackies stood their ground pluckily. Some of them huddled close to the wall to avoid the rain of steel-jacketed bullets from above, while others dashed across a small open space directly in front of the building. These blue-jackets dropped on their stomachs and lifted their rifles high to get a range on the windows above. Finally the American officers hustled their men either forward or backward until they were in the shelter of nearby buildings.

Men in Front Undaunted.
The jackies in front held their places, however, and the Prairie sent shell after shell from her three-inch battery into the windows of the college; huge columns of red dust leaped upward as each shot went home. The Chester also joined in, and with a roar her six-inch shells tore great gaps in the roof of the college. Far to the right of the harbor the mine ship San Francisco opened with her five-inch guns, and taking the front of the college, shot out window after window, planting the shells with the precision of target practice.

After 15 minutes of firing the Prairie and the San Francisco ceased and the column of jackies formed again and pushed ahead, deploying around the front of the college. A few shots were directed at them, but none came from the college. The Chester continued hurling shells into any building in which snipers lurked and also far out into the suburbs.

The jackies went ahead without faltering, spreading out throughout the waterfront sections, seizing the highest buildings and organizing squads of guards at street intersections.

The fire along the front gradually slackened and then died out, but the Chester sent a few shots into the hills before ceasing. The Hancock, with 700 marines on board, and the battleship Michigan arrived too late to participate in the fighting.

Wounded and prisoners were taken aboard the Prairie until the arrival of the Solace, about noon.

Vera Cruz Thoroughly Cowed.

Conditions in Vera Cruz began to take on a normal aspect Thursday. Some of the restaurants were opened and a considerable part of the native population began to appear in the streets inspecting the damage done. There were no expressions of good will for the Americans, but there was no apparent antagonism. The Mexicans here seem thoroughly cowed and appear to accept with passiveness the presence of the foreign forces.

SENATORS OFFER TO ENLIST

Fall, New Mexico, and Sheppard, Texas, Tender Services.

Washington.—Senators Fall of New Mexico and Sheppard of Texas have written the president offering their services in the operations against Mexico. Senator Weeks of Massachusetts already had volunteered.

Senator Fall wrote that he was ready to resign from the senate and go to the front.

Senator Williams of Mississippi, who made a speech in the senate Tuesday opposing war with Mexico, had written to the president asking that his son, Robert Webb Williams, be appointed a second lieutenant in the volunteer service.

All offers have been sent to the war department.

MAP OF MEXICO SHOWING PORTS BLOCKADED BY U. S. NAVY



HUERTA ACCEPTS MEDIATION OFFER; WILSON IS GRATIFIED

Washington.—Huerta has consented to mediate the crisis with the United States government. This statement was made at the Spanish embassy, which has been designated by Huerta to represent him at Washington.

Senor Riano, Spanish ambassador, says that his advice was not official, but that he had received word from the City of Mexico that Huerta had consented.

It is expected the official communication from Huerta will be received at the Spanish embassy to be delivered to the diplomatic representatives in Washington of Argentina, Chile and Brazil.

This means that all hostilities between the United States and Huerta will cease, at least pending the mediation proceedings.

So far as can be learned, no word has yet been received from Carranza, but there is no doubt in Washington that he will be forced now, through public sentiment in Mexico, to become a party to the mediation.

If Huerta finally accepts the conditions imposed by President Wilson and consents to his own elimination and the establishment of a constitutional government, he will be reversing himself on his previous defiant stand toward these demands. On several occasions he has flatly refused to consider any such proposals.

In the present emergency, however, Huerta will find himself under tremendous pressure, not only from the European powers, but from practically all of the Latin-American countries.

Administration Officials Gratified.
The interests of the Huerta government in the United States were taken over by the Spanish embassy when Charge Alkara asked for his passports and left Washington for Canada.

Ambassador Riano received the offer of good offices from the three peace envoys after the offer had been accepted on the part of the United States by President Wilson. It was cabled at once to the Spanish minister at Mexico City and by him presented to President Huerta.

When the formal acceptance from Mexico City is in hand the South American diplomats will be ready to proceed with their plan, no intimation of the nature of which as yet has been given.

It has been generally understood here, however, that the peace envoys expect to deal directly with the situation created by the resentment by the United States government against the Tampico incident and other offenses against its honor and dignity, hoping to bring about a peaceful settlement.

Administration officials here appeared to be much gratified at the prospect of having the proposals of the great South American republics listened to by Gen. Huerta. Until the nature of their plan is known no officer of the administration will have comment to make.

Hope for peace, yet no slackening in preparations for war, was the spirit of the day's developments in the Mexican crisis.

President Wilson, hopeful though not confident that war may be averted through the efforts of Argentina, Brazil and Chile, conferred with Secretary Garrison, approving orders for the joint jurisdiction of the army and navy over Vera Cruz and vicinity when Brig. Gen. Funston, who will be in command there, and his troops arrive to re-enforce Admiral Fletcher's forces of marines and blue-jackets.

Tension over the one phase of the situation which may at any moment upset peace plans—was partly relieved by an announcement of Secretary Bryan that, through the British embassy here, the Huerta officials and Admiral Fletcher had arranged for the safe departure of Americans from the

Mexican capital and the free exodus of Mexicans from Vera Cruz.

WILSON ACCEPTS PEACE PLAN

OF SOUTH AMERICAN ENVOYS.

Washington.—Pan-American diplomacy made its first attempt to solve the Mexican crisis by peaceful negotiations.

The United States government accepted from Argentina, Brazil and Chile a formal offer to act as intermediaries in the present situation, but reservedly pointed out that an act of aggression by military forces or hostile demonstrations toward Americans might upset hopes of immediate peace.

The Brazilian ambassador and the Argentine and Chilean ministers, upon receiving information that their offer of good offices had been accepted by the United States, conferred to discuss what their next step in the mediation would be.

The text of the offer made by the Brazilian ambassador and the ministers from Argentina and Chile and the reply of the American government, transmitted by Secretary Bryan in person to the three diplomats, is as follows:

Wilson's Reply to Offer.

"The government of the United States is deeply sensible of the friendliness, the good feeling, and the generous concern for the peace and welfare of America manifested in the joint note just received from your excellency tendering the good offices of your government of the present difficulty between the government of the United States and those who now claim to represent our sister Republic of Mexico. Conscious of the purpose with which the proffer is made, this government does not feel at liberty to decline it.

"Its own chief interest is in the peace of America, the cordial intercourse of her republic and her people, and the happiness and prosperity which can spring out of frank mutual understandings, and the friendship which is created by common purposes. The generous offer of your government is therefore accepted.

"This government hopes most earnestly that you may find those who speak for the several elements of the Mexican people willing and ready to discuss terms of satisfactory and, therefore, permanent settlement.

Conditions Attached to Acceptance.

"If you find them willing, this government will be glad to take up with you for discussion in the frankest and most conciliatory spirit any proposals that may be authoritatively formulated, and will hope that they may prove feasible and prophetic of a new day of mutual co-operation and confidence in America.

"This government feels bound in candor to say that its diplomatic relations with Mexico being for the present severed, it is not at all possible for it to make sure of an uninterrupted opportunity to carry out the plan of intermediation which you propose. It is, of course, possible that some act of aggression on the part of those who control the military forces of Mexico might oblige the United States to act to the upsetting of the hopes of immediate peace, but this does not justify us in hesitating to accept your generous suggestion. We shall hope for the best results within a brief time, enough to relieve our anxiety lest most ill-considered hostile demonstrations should interrupt negotiations and disappoint our hopes of peace."

Text of the Offer Made.

"Mr. Secretary of State:

"With the purpose of subserving the interest of peace and civilization in our continent, and with the earnest desire to prevent any further bloodshed to the prejudice of the cordiality

and union which have always surrounded the relations of the governments and the people of America, we, the plenipotentiaries of Brazil, Argentina and Chile, duly authorized hereto, have the honor to tender your excellency's government our good offices for the peaceful and friendly settlement of the conflict between the United States and Mexico.

"This offer puts in due form the suggestions which we have had occasion to offer heretofore on this subject to the secretary, to whom we renew the assurances of our highest and most distinguished consideration. (Signed) D. Du Gama, R. S. Noa, Eduardo Suarez Mujica."

War Preparations Pushed.

War preparations were actively pushed in Washington, as the prevailing belief in official circles is that Gen. Huerta will surely reject the offer of mediation by the three South American republics. Neither Huerta nor Carranza has replied to the mediation offer.

Arrangements were made by the war department for the mobilization of the militia.

By orders of Huerta, according to a report, 125 Americans were dragged from a train while fleeing Mexico City and turned loose at the mercy of mobs and infuriated Mexicans.

Huerta consented to permit the 800 Americans he had held in the City of Mexico as hostages to depart for Vera Cruz. Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, the British ambassador in Washington, made this possible through the British embassy in Mexico City.

Fears are entertained that 50 Americans, most of them women and children, refugees from Agua Calientes, have been massacred by Mexican mobs or soldiers. They were dragged from a train while on their way to Vera Cruz, mobs demanded their lives and priests were summoned to hear confessions, when soldiers intervened and thrust them into prison in the smelter at Agua Calientes.

News of their plight was carried to Vera Cruz by one man who escaped. Mr. Canada, the American consul at Vera Cruz, is doing his utmost to have their lives spared.

British and German war vessels took on board several hundred American refugees at Tampico and carried them to Vera Cruz, whence they will be trans-shipped to Galveston.

The tender Dixie, laden with hundreds of refugees, arrived at Galveston.

Montevideo Students Riot.

Buenos Ayres.—There was another big anti-American demonstration at Montevideo, Uruguay, by students and others. Twenty of the rioters were injured and many others were bruised in an attempt to break through the guard which President Jose Batlle Ordonez had ordered around the American legation when the rioting began.

Federals Raid Coahuila Ranch.

Washington.—An American who has just arrived at Eagle Pass, Tex. from Musquiz, a town in Coahuila, reports that the Mexican federals have taken from Rosedra ranch 250 horses, 150 mules and 11,000 cattle.

New York Receives Confirmation.

New York.—Private telegrams received here from Vera Cruz said that that city was still completely cut off from telegraphic communication with Mexico City.

Capture of Monterey.

Washington.—The federal stronghold of Monterey at last has been captured by the constitutionalists, according to a report from the American consul at Nuevo Laredo.

SOLONS RESTLESS OVER SITUATION

HUERTA'S FAILURE TO DECLARE
WAR PREVENTS US TAKING
AGGRESSIVE STEPS.

INACTIVITY IS DISAPPOINTING

Authorities Are Urged by Leaders to
Take Definite Stand, but So Far
All Knowledge Is With-
held From Public.

Washington, D. C.—Huerta is preventing the United States from starting an aggressive campaign in Mexico. President Wilson and all of his advisers were confident that his handling of passports to O'Shaughnessy would be followed by a formal declaration of war. This would then have permitted the United States to have accepted the defection and rushed its troops into the interior from Vera Cruz.

Huerta, instead, has contented himself with issuing proclamations denouncing the United States, calling on all classes of Mexicans to rally to the support of the government, but not issuing the document that would mean a formal war. As a result the administration has been unable to take any steps toward actual reprisals other than the landing of its men at Vera Cruz.

The diplomatic situation over Mexico is causing unrest in Washington. Congressional leaders are importuning the White House for an announcement of a definite policy, but no word comes from the president. He and his advisers may have a definite plan, but all knowledge of it is withheld from the public. The inevitable result of a campaign of silence has been the circulation of rumors which are accepted as truth because they are not denied. There is a tenseness in congress which may break into open criticism of Secretary Bryan and the president at any moment.

Congressional leaders generally believe that the president and Bryan have been in negotiations with Carranza. They say they are assured that the president sent word to Gen. Villa that with Vera Cruz in the hands of the United States forces there was now no reason why the constitutionalist forces now at Tampico should not push directly southward without delay and take Mexico City. These congressional chieftains insist the reports that the constitutionalists have renewed their assault on Tampico confirms this belief.

The White House and state department refuse to discuss the matter. But Secretary Bryan and Secretary Daniels have issued several direct statements praising Carranza, Villa and their men and insisting there is no chance that they will join hands with Huerta.

Says Wilson Misinformed.

Chicago, Ill.—President Wilson has been given incorrect information regarding the true situation in Mexico, according to Blawett Lee, general solicitor of the Illinois Central railway, in an address at the annual dinner of the Princeton club of Chicago.

Army Wireless for Mexico.

New York.—A powerful wireless plant, said to be the largest ever constructed for use of an army in the field, is packed and ready for shipment at Bedloe's island. Orders are expected from Washington to forward the outfit to Vera Cruz.

Sentenced as Husband of 2.

Quincy, Ill.—J. William Tolle, a former Quincy resident, who married Miss Grace Brosi, daughter of a wealthy Quincy resident, has been sentenced from one to five years in the state penitentiary at Joliet for bigamy.

\$1,350,000 Fire in Baltimore.

Baltimore, Md.—Fire destroyed the big plants of the Atlantic Fertilizer company and the United States Fertilizer company at Curtis Bay, a suburb. The loss is estimated at \$1,350,000, covered by insurance.

Eyelids Grafted on Girl.

Baltimore, Md.—An operation that is unique in the annals of surgery was performed here at the Presbyterian Eye, Ear and Throat hospital, when three pieces of skin were taken from the arm of Miss Ruth Trigue and grafted as lids for her left eye.

Measure to Regulate Dams.

Washington.—The house interstate commerce committee reported a general bill amending the dam laws with a view to encouraging private capital for power generation purposes.

Woman in Jail Tries to Choke Self.

Quincy, Ill.—Despondent because of alleged abuse by her husband, Mrs. Peadar Stravinski tried to choke herself in the cell of the city jail. She made a noose of her undershirt and jerked it tight with her knees.

Many Americans Expected.

Christiana, Norway.—Thousands of American visitors are expected in Christiania this summer to witness the celebration of the centennial of the independence of Norway from Denmark.